

## Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 PEKING 00179 290951Z

13

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NSCE-00 PM-07 NSC-10 SPC-03 SS-20

RSC-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-04 USIA-15

PRS-01 NIC-01 SAJ-01 DRC-01 /089 W

----- 118547

R 290915Z JAN 74

FM USLO PEKING

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1310

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PEKING 179

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, CH

SUBJECT: SPRING FESTIVAL IN PEKING

1. THOUGH THE OFFICIAL HOLIDAY LASTED THREE DAYS ONLY, JANUARY 23-25, MANY MINISTRIES, MOST OF THE SMALLER SHOPS EXCEPT THOSE SELLING FOOD, AND SEVERAL RESTAURANTS IN PEKING MANAGED TO ARRANGE FOR A FIVE-DAY VACATION BY WORKING ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 20 AND TAKING THE FOLLOWING SATURDAY OFF. SCHOOLS, FACTORIES, AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS GENERALLY DECORATED THEIR ENTRANCES, SOME WITH STRINGS OF LIGHTS OR ILLUMINATED SIGNS. THEATRICAL COMPANIES WERE ACTIVE WITH A NUMBER OF STANDARD REPERTORY PIECES AND A "NORTH CHINA OPERA, DRAMA, AND BALLET" SERIES. AS IS CUSTOMARY, MOST CELEBRATING TOOK PLACE AT HOME.

2. DESPITE ADMONITIONS TO CELEBRATE IN A REVOLUTIONARY SPIRIT AND AVOID EXTRAVAGANCE, CUSTOMERS FLOCKED TO THE DEPARTMENT STORES IN THE DAYS BEFORE CLOSING, CROWDING AROUND THE DRY GOODS AND READY-TO-WEAR COUNTERS IN SEARCH OF OFTEN-COLORFUL NEW CLOTHING. SHOPPERS QUEUED UP AT FOOD STORES TILL LATE AT NIGHT LAYING IN PROVISIONS FOR HOLIDAY FEASTING. FIREWORKS OF ALL KINDS SOLD BRISKLY, AND CHILDREN AND PARENTS GATHRED ON STREET CORNERS EVERY NIGHT OF THE HOLIDAY DESPITE THE BITTER COLD

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 PEKING 00179 290951Z

TO SET OFF ROMAN CANDLES, SPARKLERS, AND STRINGS OF FIRECRACKERS.

WE HAVE BEEN TOLD THE AMOUNT OF FIREWORKS WAS SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASED OVER LAST YEAR, AND SMALL CHILDREN WERE SEEN CARRYING COLORFUL RED LANTERNS ON STICKS, MANY MORE THAN AT ANY TIME SINCE BEFORE THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION.

3. BUSLOADS OF FAMILIES ARRIVED IN PEKING FROM OUT OF TOWN AND SPENT THE DAY STROLLING AROUND T'EN AN MEN AND THE SHOPPING STREETS. IN WHAT MAY OR MAY NOT BE TYPICAL, ANNIE HSIAO INFORMED USLO THAT HER SON HAD BEEN GIVEN 20 DAYS FURLOUGH AND SOME POCKET MONEY AND ALLOWED TO COME HOME TO VISIT HIS MOTHER. IN FACT, NEWSPAPERS MADE MENTION OF SPECIAL POLITICAL CLASSES FOR DOWN-TO-THE-COUNTRYSIDE YOUTH GIVEN LEAVE TO VISIT RELATIVES. THREE-GENERATION FAMILY GROUPS WERE ALSO MUCH IN EVIDENCE AT THE DRAMATIC PERFORMANCES. AS USUAL, WHAT DREW THE MOST APPLAUSE WAS NOT THE IDEOLOGICAL MESSAGE, BUT SOME PARTICULAR PIECE OF VIRTUOSO SINGING OR A PORTRAYAL WITH SPECIAL PANACHE, SUCH AS THE ANTICS OF KUOMINTANG COMMANDER HU IN SHACHIAPANG. MANY SPECTATORS WAITED FOR THE TUMBLING SCENE THAT INVARIABLY COMES NEAR THE END OF LOCAL OPERA PRODUCTIONS AND THEN WALKED OUT ON THE GRAND FINALE TO CATCH A BUS HOME.

4. COMMENT: THE OVERALL IMPRESSION OF SPRING FESTIVAL IN PEKING WAS OF A LOW-KEY, NON-POLITICAL, FAMILY-ORIENTED HOLIDAY. FOREIGNERS WITH SEVERAL YEARS RESIDENCE IN PEKING AGREE THAT THE ATMOSPHERE WAS MORE RELAXED AND THE MERRY-MAKING MUCH MORE EVIDENT THAN IN THE PAST. IN ANY CASE, THOUGH THE ANTI-CONFUCIUS CAMPAIGN CONTINUES UNABATED IN THE PRESS, THERE SEEMS TO BE REMARKABLY LITTLE TENSION IN THE AIR JUST NOW.  
JENKINS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PUBLIC RELATIONS, HOLIDAYS, PUBLIC ATTITUDES  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 29 JAN 1974  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** MorefiRH  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1974PEKING00179  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** n/a  
**From:** PEKING  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1974/newtext/t1974019/aaaaahmw.tel  
**Line Count:** 92  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE  
**Office:** ACTION EA  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:**  
**Previous Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** MorefiRH  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 10 JUL 2002  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <10 JUL 2002 by rowelle0>; APPROVED <04-Sep-2002 by MorefiRH>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** SPRING FESTIVAL IN PEKING  
**TAGS:** PFOR, CH  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005